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President: The Hon. Julian R. Hunte ..... (Saint Lucia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 20 (*continued*)

Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

Report of the Secretary-General (A/58/392)

Mr. Nikiforov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation considers United Nations support for the promotion and consolidation of new or restored democracies to be an important component of the overall work of the Organization, particularly in promoting international cooperation and ensuring human rights and freedoms.

In that connection, it is difficult to overemphasize the role of the International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, which is very important to ensuring the further development of democracy. We believe that democracy, development, human rights and freedom are all interdependent and mutually reinforcing. That point was made in the Vienna Declaration adopted at the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights: democracy is based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems. The construction and development of democracy and the United Nations approach on this issue have to take into account the fact that there is in fact no single formula for democracy. In the final decades of the twentieth century, in fact, the contrary could be noted. It is always counterproductive to try to achieve democracy in just one manner; that actually results in violations of human rights and freedoms. It is important to take into account the particular characteristics of each individual State. Due consideration of those factors in the work of the United Nations and its agencies helps achieve better results and enables the Organization to encourage the development of democratic institutions. One thing is certain: we cannot make assistance to countries contingent on any kind of so-called democracy index or indicators.

As we have said, the Russian delegation welcomes the work being done at the intergovernmental level in further implementation of the outcome of the fourth Conference of New or Restored Democracies, held in Benin, and the fifth Conference, held this year in Ulaanbaatar.

At the same time, we also stress that such conferences have to be open forums. They cannot be just for the select few. Restricting admission to the Conference would have a negative impact on the level of discussion and on the outcome. Broad representation ensures that everyone can benefit from the experience of others.

The greatest advantage of such broad representation is that all members of the international community will be able to share their positive experiences of democratic development and values. I call for the further strengthening of democratic processes and greater assistance for new and restored

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democracies so that we can move towards a community of democracies. Peaceful coexistence is essential, but we must now focus on working together.

Mr. Kim Sam-hoon (Republic of Korea): I would like to begin by extending my delegation's heartfelt congratulations to the Government of Mongolia and, in particular, to Foreign Minister Luvsangiin Erdenechuluun, on the success of the fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, excellently prepared and hosted with great dedication by Mongolia in Ulaanbaatar from 10 to 12 September this year. As the Secretary-General noted in his report contained in document A/58/392, the Conference "succeeded beyond expectations" (*para. 5*).

The Government of the Republic of Korea actively participated in the Ulaanbaatar Conference and was pleased to note the growing global support for efforts to promote democratization, as evidenced in the broad and high-level participation in the Conference. With the action-oriented commitments that participating Governments made in Ulaanbaatar, benchmarks have been clarified that new and restored democratic societies can aspire to achieve.

The Government of the Republic of Korea, which hosted the second Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies, which took place in November last year, greatly welcomes the growth of the new or restored democracies process, and will actively participate in the follow-up, both within and outside the United Nations context. We believe that the two movements can and should evolve in a mutually complementary and reinforcing manner.

Indeed, as can be seen from the respective themes chosen for the Seoul Conference and the Ulaanbaatar Conference — "Investing for peace and prosperity" and "Democracy, good governance and civil society"— as well as from their outcomes, the two movements have much in common, including the shared goal of promoting and strengthening democracies worldwide, the importance they place on regional cooperation, the desire to nurture vibrant civil societies, the readiness to extend assistance to aspiring democracies and the commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights and freedom as the basic form of sustenance, as well as an abiding guide, for democracy.

We believe that the difference in approach — the push of the International Conference of New or Restored Democracies and the pull of the Conference of the Community of Democracies — holds the promise of the two movements working in different but convergent ways to strengthen democratic ways of life throughout the world so that people everywhere can live with dignity, free from want and in peace. In this regard, I welcome the statement made by the Foreign Minister of Mongolia in which he expressed his intention to initiate discussions with the chairmanship of the Conference of the Community of Democracies so as to exchange views on ways of bringing the two movements closer together in a complementary manner. My delegation supports the commencement of such discussions.

The Secretary-General's report offers a comprehensive review of all the activities undertaken by the United Nations system in the area of democracy assistance. It is heartening to learn about the multifaceted ways in which the various agencies and bodies of the United Nations have set out to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies and to enhance their own capacity in responding effectively to the requests of Member States in this regard. The Republic of Korea is fully behind those efforts. We agree entirely with the Secretary-General's view that the promotion of democracy is one of the main goals of the Organization for the twenty-first century.

We appreciate every aspect of the inventory of United Nations democracy assistance during the past few years — from State and institutional reform to the development of civil society and democratic political culture, research, policy development and the implementation of norms and standards. All elements of such assistance deserve to be mentioned and probed for further work by the United Nations system. But I would like in particular to dwell on the need for further research, on which effective policies can be based to maximize the interdependence between democracy and human rights.

It is widely accepted that democracy and human rights are interdependent and inseparable. That view was confirmed by the conclusions of an expert seminar organized last year by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. But beyond that broad understanding, the picture is hazy. Democracy studies and human rights studies each boast a rich history and a wealth of knowledge. The attempt to bring the two fields together at the policy level is a relatively new undertaking. Concrete corollaries of

how different rights connect with different aspects of democracy have yet to emerge. We have a great deal of leeway in our search for answers. In this regard, we welcome the plan to organize a seminar in 2004 on human rights and good governance, as referred to in the Secretary-General's report. My Government is ready to play an active role in ensuring the success of that seminar.

In conclusion, the Republic of Korea reiterates its commitment to promoting democracy and human rights at home and abroad, including through the efforts of the United Nations system to support Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies.

Mr. Torrington (Guyana): The delegation of Guyana is pleased to associate itself with the constructive statements of preceding speakers on agenda item 20, "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies".

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General (A/58/392), and particularly the recommendations contained therein. Given that we are considering the inextricable linkage between the pursuit of the fundamental objectives of the United Nations in safeguarding the basic rights of all individuals and the expansion of democracy in the world, it is fitting that the United Nations system should be in the vanguard of supporting the efforts of Governments.

At the heart of the promotion and consolidation of democracy is the quest to develop cohesive norms that allow for the dynamic interaction and mutual reinforcement of democratic principles and perspectives at the international, regional and domestic levels. Two aspects in particular bear mentioning in the context of the quest to overcome new challenges to greater democratization.

First, the entrenchment of democracy presents a challenge in that it elicits governance of a more responsive nature. The net result of the accommodation of varied perspectives is strengthened governance and more enlightened developmental policies. Achieving that end, however, requires the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy, as well as of financial and human resources whose availability is already limited. The second aspect is revealed in the varied experiences of new or restored democracies, which have in recent times subjected the mechanisms, role, significance and issues of participatory democracy to very close scrutiny.

Together, these challenges can undermine the capacity to effectively address urgent social and economic problems. The overarching lesson is that democracy must be made more meaningful to those it serves. There is thus a great need for democratic norms to be adapted to accord with local realities. Success in this regard is better ensured by more cohesive, yet flexible, conceptions of democracy.

Nascent democracy also has to contend with the transformations and upheavals of increased trade liberalization and globalization. The increased vulnerability to which developing States are subject does not lend itself to the smooth progress of democratization. In this regard, it is worthy of note that our subscription to democratic ideals is not contingent on their manifestation at the international level, but engenders the expectation of their fuller expression in the mechanisms and institutions of global governance.

Since the restoration of full democracy in Guyana with the holding of free and fair elections 11 years ago, Guyana has striven to consolidate its democratic gains through the investment of significant national energies and resources. We believe that democracy is indispensable to the sustainable development of our nation as a progressive, modern State. Efforts have thus been ongoing to effect better governance through a process of constitutional reform; a structured engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society, trade unions, the media and the business sector; the strengthening of national institutions, such as the judiciary; the according of attention to ethnic and race relations; the revitalization of local governance; and the decentralization of governmental services. This process of building the institutions to entrench and sustain democracy has been supported by the valuable assistance of bilateral partners and international organizations.

Although in Guyana — as is the case in many new or restored democracies — the democratic entitlement of citizens has been considerably boosted, expectations outpace the tangible gains attributable to democracy. This situation allows for recourse to expressions of discontent — often manifested in phenomena, such as the brain drain, which are so inimical to the national interest — provides options for opportunists, and equips residual cynics with

arguments in favour of more productive, shorter-term, but less democratic solutions.

On this account, the delegation of Guyana is convinced that the international community has been provided with an opportune juncture and a rationale for a more collaborative endeavour in support of new or restored democracies. The need to merge the debates on democratization and on economic and trade aspects is foremost in this regard. The compartmentalization of those issues does not exist in the real life of citizens in the developing world. Indeed, there is an essential interrelation between the economic growth and trade prospects of nations and democratic governance — a fact that the 2003 United Nations Development Programme report on the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals by specific countries and regions makes more explicit.

It is clear, therefore, that there should be increased — not decreased — international and donor commitment and support for the gestation of democracy in new or restored democracies, especially in situations of increased vulnerability. Guyana therefore welcomes the outcome of the fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from 10 to 12 September, as embodied in the Conference's Declaration and Plan of Action. We are confident that that will provide fresh impetus for our collaborative endeavours.

The United Nations system is well placed to play a pivotal role in this process. The delegation of Guyana appeals for more integrated and effective efforts and better follow-up mechanisms to ensure that the United Nations system can better secure the objective of greater democratization.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 20.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

Third report of the General Committee (A/57/250/Add.2)

The President: The General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the item entitled "Question of the Comorian island of Mayotte" be deferred to the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly and that it be included in the provisional agenda of that session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 36

Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity on the aerial and naval military attack against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya by the present United States Administration in April 1986

The President: It is my understanding that, after the necessary consultations, consideration of agenda item 36 may be deferred to the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of the item and to include it in the provisional agenda of the fifty-ninth session?

It was so decided.

The President: We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 36.

Agenda items 25 and 44

University for Peace

Report of the Secretary-General (A/58/430)

Draft resolution (A/58/L.16)

Culture of peace

Note by the Secretary-General (A/58/182)

Draft resolutions (A/58/L.13 and A/58/L.14)

The President: In connection with agenda item 44, the Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, circulated in document A/58/182.

I give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh to introduce draft resolution A/58/L.14.

Mrs. Naz (Bangladesh): It is a great pleasure for my delegation to initiate the discussion under agenda item 44, "Culture of peace". We thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the useful report (A/58/182) on the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010.

We are rediscovering and realizing the values of peace, tolerance, understanding and solidarity in the present world. Broader concepts are now necessary to explain and address the complex reality of the twenty-first century. As a concept, the culture of peace attempts to do just that. The culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes and ways of life based on principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity and respect for diversity, dialogue and understanding.

We — the Member States, the rest of the United Nations system, civil society organizations and individuals — need to dedicate ourselves to promoting a culture of peace and to working for a campaign against all forms of violence, particularly violence against children. We are appreciative of the roles of UNESCO as the designated lead agency, the United Nations Children's Fund and the University for Peace in promoting a culture of peace. UNESCO has recognized the promotion of a culture of peace as an expression of its fundamental mandate. Manifesto 2000 has so far received more than 75 million signatures of endorsement throughout the world. We encourage UNESCO to continue its important role throughout the Decade. We would also encourage civil society to undertake more activities to complement the initiatives of Member States, the United Nations and other global and regional organizations in that regard.

This year, as in previous years, my delegation has the honour to introduce — on behalf of the other sponsors and my country, Bangladesh — a draft resolution (A/58/L.14) entitled "International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010". In addition to the countries listed in that document, I take much pleasure in announcing the names of the following countries, which have also joined in sponsoring the draft resolution: Algeria, Belize, Colombia, Malawi, the Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Tajikistan.

The draft resolution is based on General Assembly resolution 57/6 of 4 November 2002. A new preambular paragraph and a number of technical updates have been incorporated into the text. The new preambular paragraph — the tenth — takes note of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003, on the prevention of armed conflict, which, we believe, could contribute to further promotion of a culture of peace. In the ninth preambular paragraph, we inserted "gender equality" into the list of efforts by the United Nations system in general and the international community at large that contribute greatly to a culture of peace. Action to ensure equality between men and women was one of the areas of concern, as identified in the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, as contained in General Assembly resolution 53/243 of 13 September 1999.

It is our earnest hope that the draft resolution will receive the unanimous support of the entire United Nations membership and that it will be adopted by consensus, reflecting global solidarity on efforts to achieve this noble goal.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica to introduce draft resolution A/58/L.16.

Mrs. Chassoul (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, It is my pleasure to add to the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/58/L.16 the following countries: Greece, Monaco, Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste and Ukraine.

Convinced that it was necessary to confront threats to peace from a novel perspective, in 1978 we proposed to the General Assembly the creation of a University for Peace. At the time, we based our proposal on the conviction that peace, like war, is not the result of historical inevitability but springs from the very freedom of man. The countless victims of war demand that we be creative to overcome the idea that *Si vis pacem, para bellum* — "If you want peace, prepare for war" — transforming it into the moral imperative "If you want peace, prepare for peace", because replacing education for war with education for peace was, and remains, our principal objective.

However, it was not until 1980 that Costa Ricans had the pleasure of witnessing the adoption by the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session of resolution 35/55, containing the text of the International Agreement for the Establishment of the University for Peace and Charter of the University for Peace. That was the first universal recognition of Costa Rica's peaceful vocation, adopted unanimously by the representatives of all nations in the world's most important forum without any ideological or political distinctions.

At a time of confrontation, the United Nations role in promoting peace and security has become more important and complex. Recent events have demonstrated the importance of preventing and resolving contradictory trends. As a consequence, the role of the University for Peace is assuming greater relevance today, in view of the urgent need to maintain peace, to avoid armed conflicts and to rehabilitate civil society in post-conflict situations.

In that context, we thank the Secretary-General for submitting his report on the University for Peace (A/58/430), which is truly encouraging, because it demonstrates that the University has made significant progress, particularly in attaining two objectives. The first is the establishment of a high-level academic programme with training and research elements focusing on the critical aspects of peace and security. The second is the expansion of the programme to different parts of the world, from its headquarters in Costa Rica. This was in compliance with the guidelines of the General Assembly and the Administration of the University for Peace, as well as the guidance of the Secretary-General.

Under the supervision of its council of experts the University has carried out new and rigorous masters' programmes focusing on a study of the fundamental causes of conflict among peoples based upon a multidisciplinary and multicultural approach. These programmes are taught to students from all over the world and include topics such as international peace, international law and conflict prevention, human rights, natural resources and sustainable development and gender issues.

A considerable number of short courses will also be offered on peace and economic development, gender and peace-building, human security and natural resource management. We are gratified to see the efforts made to expand the impact of the resources of the University through tele-studies, which will make our curricula accessible over the Internet. We are also preparing course materials and teaching aids to support the work of other universities so that topics such as peace-building and conflict prevention can be taught elsewhere. Those are some of the achievements of the University for Peace, of which we are very proud. We are glad that the teaching of peace is undertaken elsewhere, outside of Costa Rica, and that there are many alliances and institutions focusing on teaching and research throughout the continents.

We are very satisfied when we see the situation in Africa, where a five-year support programme for African universities has been implemented in order to expand the capacity of these universities for teaching and research. The same applies to Central Asia, where a three-year programme has been designed, focusing on the teaching of studies on peace and conflict.

We are also gratified to see the progress in Asia and the Pacific where a network of key universities has been identified and where it has been possible to make use of the technical knowledge of the members of the network to create new courses in the participating universities.

Finally, we are gratified to see progress in Latin America and the Caribbean, where practices to improve human security have been developed in connection with two interlinked matters: the conduct of the police and security forces and the role of the armed forces. Costa Rica is convinced that sound management of existing resources is reflected by a better level of education and that is why we are glad to see the modernization of the University through systems of administration, auditing and management which are now up to international standards.

We recognize that the University for Peace has worked under difficult conditions in order to obtain the necessary resources for its revitalization, to support its academic programme, to expand its activities and to strengthen the scholarship programme which provides financial aid to qualified deserving students. In this context, Costa Rica is grateful to the donor countries and foundations and institutions that have supported the University. However, greater political and financial support will be necessary in the future so that the University can make the best possible use of its potential. We must recall that a strong and fruitful

peace, not the mere absence of war, but a peace based on truth, justice and respect for the rights of others is the ultimate goal of humanity as we begin the twenty-first century.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines to introduce draft resolution A/58/L.13.

Mr. Mercado (Philippines): Allow me to begin by quoting the Secretary-General from his report on the culture of peace to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, in which he stated that

> "The transition from the culture of war to a culture of peace, initially taken up as a priority by UNESCO, has now been taken up by the United Nations as well." (*A/53/370, p. 4, para. 3*)

The Secretary-General affirmed, by that statement, that the culture of peace has gained far-reaching significance, requiring the attention of this universal body and not just one specialized agency of the United Nations.

Since its emergence from the International Congress on Peace in the Minds of Men, organized by UNESCO in Côte d'Ivoire in July 1989, the concept of a culture of peace has so inspired many activities in different places around the world that it has become a crucial element in our efforts to achieve international peace and development, the very foundation upon which the United Nations was built.

The adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace in September 1999 and its subsequent implementation by UNESCO, with the participation of other United Nations bodies, Governments and civil society, have sown the seeds for the worldwide propagation of this concept.

Today, the set of values, attitudes, traditions and customs, modes of behaviour and ways of life covered by the concept of the culture of peace, which includes respect for life, full respect for human rights, rejection of violence, sustainable human development, conflict prevention and tolerance, solidarity, pluralism and acceptance of differences and understanding between nations and between ethnic, religious, cultural and other groups and individuals, are now integral components of almost all major initiatives at national, regional and multilateral forums.

However, there is still a lot more that can be done for the culture of peace to be durably instilled in the hearts and minds of men. Aside from programmes and projects involving Governments, more efforts should be exerted to engage all concerned, including non-governmental actors, through positive and participatory processes by which differences are respected, dialogues encouraged, and conflicts constantly transformed through non-violent means into new avenues for cooperation. It is through this mode of positive interaction that key players are allowed to explore options and make positive contributions leading to peaceful and fruitful coexistence.

The promotion of the culture of peace demands the participation of the entire international community — Member States, the United Nations system, international and regional organizations and civil society. Through this comprehensive participation, the culture of peace can be nurtured, respected and universally observed. The United Nations system and national Governments have always been at the forefront of these efforts to the apparent exclusion of civil society in this work. Civil society's involvement would have had a positive impact on this global movement for a culture of peace. Collaboration and cooperation with civil society can indeed help create the conditions that allow for the rapid development of a culture of peace.

One important sector of civil society we can consider in pursuit of peace and development — the very root of the culture of peace — is the religious community. Religion is a powerful force in promoting peace, harmony, understanding and cooperation through its strong moral influence over the faithful. In particular, interreligious dialogue and cooperation can serve as a collective tool to respect or bridge differences, as appropriate, and help achieve positive outcomes, such as preventing or resolving conflict and garnering support for key initiatives that advance the welfare of humanity in support of the purposes of the United Nations.

The Philippines has its own rich experience in this regard. We have the Bishops-Ulama Forum in the southern Philippines where Catholic Mindanao bishops, Muslim religious leaders and protestant bishops have engaged in interreligious dialogue to affirm their common commitments to peace and mutual understanding among their religious communities. Their views are regularly presented to the Government.

This interreligious cooperation started in 1996 and the spiritual leaders still continue to meet.

Interreligious dialogue is not a new phenomenon. Various religious leaders and their followers have long realized the importance of collaborating for peace, and many interreligious dialogues at the international scale have been held, for example the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, held in this very Hall in 2000. In January 2002, His Holiness Pope John Paul II, committed to interreligious dialogue, convened in Assisi, Italy, the leaders of different faiths who all prayed for a common cause — peace and security. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in a joint effort with the Government of Uzbekistan, organized the International Conference on Interreligious Dialogue held in September 2000. The most recent event was the First Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, held in Kazakhstan in September of this year.

The potential of interreligious dialogue and cooperation should be harnessed, not just at the national and regional level, but even more at the international level. Interreligious dialogue and cooperation can be one of the key mechanisms in assisting the United Nations in attaining its goals and objectives for maintaining peace and for transforming international problems into a subject of international cooperation. At this time, when changes in the world do not necessarily result in a more peaceful or safer environment, the United Nations should resort to the broadest spectrum of parties and personalities to carry out its mandate. Since religious leaders represent a group of stakeholders equally concerned in maintaining peace, they would be more than willing to contribute their share. In the end, their collective advice, insights and support could prove invaluable to the work of the United Nations.

The message of the United Nations Secretary-General, read by his representative to the First Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, held in Kazakhstan, emphasized the great influence of religious leaders on group and individual conduct and called for their contribution to the United Nations in its global mission of tolerance, development and peace. Earlier, in his report on the prevention of armed conflict, the Secretary-General indicated that religious organizations can play a role in preventing armed conflict due to the moral authority they carry in their communities.

Their impact is not limited to conflict situations. Religious leaders can also be effective agents of development. During the General Assembly's special session on children held in May 2002, the leaders of many faiths committed their communities to work together to build peace and to review teachings, programmes and policies relating to children. At the same time, they also pledged to advocate at every level on behalf of children, both in terms of policies and resources, and promised to work tirelessly to reduce the discrimination and stigma faced by children due to disease, disability, gender or minority status.

It is in this light that my delegation introduces the draft resolution contained in document A/58/L.13, entitled "Interreligious dialogue and cooperation". Our draft resolution is short, simple and straightforward. It aims to examine how interreligious dialogue and cooperation, focusing on such issues as peace and development, contributes to advancing the work of the United Nations. We envision a process or mechanism within the United Nations system with the objective of harnessing its potential. To realize this, the draft resolution calls on the General Assembly to create an open-ended working group to discuss this process or mechanism more thoroughly.

My delegation intends to undertake further consultations on this draft resolution and would encourage a positive exchange of ideas.

Today, peace and development remain elusive to many. Development, also, still remains a goal for many. Interreligious dialogues could be that missing dimension needed to reinforce the United Nations capacity to achieve its goals.

Allow me to conclude by conveying our optimism that building a culture of peace by utilizing the full potential of interreligious dialogue and cooperation is a meritorious cause and a reachable goal.

Mr. Hamid (Pakistan): The last century was marred by ideological confrontations and genocidal wars that extinguished tens of millions of lives and created the danger of obliterating human civilization itself, following the creation, use and massive deployment of nuclear weapons.

Acknowledging that wars begin in the minds of people and therefore it is in the minds of people that

the defences of peace must be constructed, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on a Culture of Peace on 13 September 1999.

A culture of peace, according to the Declaration, is a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behaviour based, inter alia, on respect for and promotion of human rights; commitment to peaceful settlement of conflicts; and adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations.

Article 3 of the Declaration proclaims that the fuller development of a culture of peace is integrally linked to the right of all peoples to self-determination. All peoples, including those living under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation, are entitled to exercise their inherent right to self-determination. Thus, nations and peoples have separate political existences but, as the General Assembly has recognized, understanding, tolerance and solidarity among all civilizations, peoples and cultures are essential to promoting a culture of peace.

The tragic attacks of September 2001 and subsequent events constitute a major setback in the search for global peace. Misunderstanding and suspicion between different faiths and cultures have become accentuated. Some have utilized this to advance their self-serving thesis of an inevitable clash of civilizations. Some States that are occupying and oppressing other peoples have exploited the situation to justify the repression of peoples of other faiths and cultures, such as the peoples of Palestine, Kashmir and elsewhere. They have denigrated Islam, its tenets and values and sought to associate it with terrorism.

Some extremists have gone to the extent of attacking Islamic religious teachings and insulting revered religious personalities. Such attempts are morally outrageous. Such prejudice, hate and defamation of Islam have evoked justifiable and widespread anger in the Islamic world.

This extremism, this intolerance has produced a reaction that further exacerbates misunderstanding between Islam and other cultures and strengthens extremism everywhere. These dangerous patterns and practices need to be addressed squarely and reversed effectively by the international community.

Ethnicity, religion, culture, language or demeanour must not be allowed to become sources of divisiveness. The thesis of a clash of civilizations and its various theoretical alternates are sure recipes for chaos. We must be the catalyst of change and not the prophets of doom. We must affirm the indivisibility of the human race. We must cherish unity in diversity. We must reassert common humanity and, indeed, common universal values.

Cooperation — and not the clash of civilizations — must be the paradigm for this century. The promotion of understanding, harmony and cooperation among religions and cultures is the indispensable avenue through which we can lift the veil of ignorance, misconception and prejudice, which have become so tragically intensified in recent times. That concept accepts the plurality and diversity of cultures and recognizes the dynamics of their institutionalized interaction. It has an enormous potential for conflict prevention and can play an effective role in resolving current and future economic, social and political problems, for the creation of a culture of peace.

The President of Pakistan, in his address before the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, outlined a concrete strategy to bridge the gulf of misunderstanding between Islam and the West. He calls this the strategy of enlightened moderation. Tolerance, harmony, socio-economic emancipation, human-resource development, and the just and peaceful resolution of disputes are essential ingredients of that strategy.

Enlightened moderation is a vital strategic option to save humanity and prevent our universal civilization from dissolving into interminable conflict and strife. Promoting the concept of enlightened moderation would be a fitting response to the enormous global challenges which the world confronts today.

That vision of moderation and cooperation already exists in the common vision and the principles and purposes of the United Nations. We must collectively reaffirm the relevance and centrality of the United Nations and the primacy of international law. There is no alternative to good-neighbourly relations, sovereign equality and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace encourages Member States to take actions for the promotion of a culture of peace at the national and

international levels. Accordingly, under this item Pakistan initiated last year a proposal for the promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation. Extensive open-ended informal consultations have been held on Pakistan's draft resolution, with a view to evolving a consensus text. Significant progress has been made towards that objective. It is the intention of the Pakistan delegation to present that draft resolution to the General Assembly in the coming weeks.

The adoption of that draft resolution will contribute to promoting and strengthening the culture of peace. It is our hope that the General Assembly will adopt by consensus Pakistan's draft resolution on the promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation. That would represent a timely, authoritative and global rejection of the messages of intolerance, hate and discrimination emanating from the proliferators of hate.

Mr. Assaf (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset warmly to thank the Secretariat and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the reports they have submitted and for their efforts to promote and enhance a culture of peace.

A culture of peace is the philosophy that inspired the creation of the United Nations in 1945. The scourge of the Second World War led us to try to avert the recurrence of such a tragedy and to put an end to a culture of war. The preamble to the Charter of the United Nations states that:

> "We, the peoples of the United Nations, determined ... to practise tolerance and to live together in peace with one another as good neighbours."

Peace cannot be defined as a negative — as simply the absence of conflict or the period of time between two wars, as Giraudoux stated. A culture of peace is something positive and ongoing and is based on education and on political will.

The period 2001-2010 has been declared the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, giving hope to all peoples for a better future. We are gathered here today to review what has been achieved through the Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace, which was adopted at the fifty-third session in 1999.

We continue to hope — yet war continues to rage. Multilateral organizations are still being marginalized, and poverty and ignorance are still rampant. Terrorist threats loom over the world, so that today we are living in a state of perpetual danger.

Against the backdrop of those tragedies, certain doctrines and theories are emerging. Unfortunately, some of them speak of a clash among civilizations and proclaim the end of the world. Some theories preach favouritism among peoples, and some espouse discrimination based on religion. And yet we still hope.

The outcome will depend on the political will of States. It will also depend on the application of the eight principles set out in the Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace: education, sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, the promotion of democracy, tolerance among civilizations, freedom of expression, and the promotion of international peace and security.

We would like to pay tribute to the educational work being done in that connection by the University for Peace, which seeks to promote a kind of higher education that would foster peace. We also welcome teaching programmes, studies and research in the areas of human rights, the resolution of conflict by peaceful means, the building of peace and other related issues. We congratulate the University for graduating last June the first batch of students under its new academic programme.

The culture of peace in Lebanon is not just a collection of principles and ideas; it is a reality that the Lebanese live daily despite the conflicts raging in the region. In Lebanon, dialogue and tolerance are at the very core of our culture. We have religious and cultural diversity, and each and every one of us has to learn to live with others. We have equal participation and power-sharing by Christians and Muslims in the Government.

Lebanon is therefore a kind of model for people to come together. As the Pope said, Lebanon is more than a country — it is a message.

In Beirut, the heads of State of the 22 Arab countries unanimously adopted the Arab Peace Initiative on 28 March 2001, which set forth a clear vision of peace in the Middle East, based on recognition of Israel and the establishment and building of peace and normal relations with Israel. In

exchange, Israel would have to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories and allow Palestinian refugees to return. The Initiative made this call despite the expansionist culture of war being pursued by Israel.

The Arab Peace Initiative is in keeping with the programme of action that we are now considering. Our Initiative was motivated by a desire for peace and recognition of the other side, but, in exchange, the occupation must end. Occupation in the Middle East is the cause of all tragedies and therefore must end, pursuant to paragraph (i) of article 10 of the programme of action, which states that an end must be put to foreign occupation, and paragraph (c) of article 16, which states that foreign territory cannot be seized by force.

Within the context of promoting the culture of peace and dialogue, the Francophone countries, at their ninth conference held in Beirut from 18 to 20 October 2001, adopted the Beirut Declaration on intercultural dialogue. That Declaration called for the promotion of peace and the democratization of international relations through intercultural dialogue, which means being open to others, respecting differences and seeking common values. Dialogue means being open to the ideas of others, even if they are different from our ideas, because, in the final analysis, diversity is the goal of dialogue. There cannot be real dialogue between identical entities. This does not necessarily mean that conflict must be involved. As the proverb states, difference of opinions does not spoil amity.

For dialogue to be successful, there must be an understanding that no one has a monopoly on the truth. So we must be self-critical and take into account and recognize the virtues of others and try to identify and rid ourselves of our own faults. Successful dialogue means developing a culture of listening to the other side in order to understand one another. It is a culture of listening and attention. How badly does our Organization need people to listen to and heed and implement its resolutions and decisions.

Finally, the culture for peace is an ongoing process; it is a long-term undertaking. If the purpose of declaring the decade 2001-2010 the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World was to enhance the international campaign for the culture of peace, then this campaign must continue after the end of this decade so that the culture of peace will win out over the culture of war and imposing one's will on others will cease.

Mr. Lagos Pizzat (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to express to you, Mr. President, the satisfaction and honour of my delegation to speak on item 44 of the agenda of the current General Assembly, entitled "Culture of peace", on behalf of the member States of the Central American Integration System (SICA): Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and my country, El Salvador.

Consideration of this item at this session is particularly important, since the international community continues to face tremendous challenges related to the maintenance of peace and security from a perspective that is based on legal and legitimate collective action within the framework of respect for the principles and the purposes established in the Charter and contemporary international law. In that context, the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World 2001-2010, above and beyond being an altruistic aspiration of Member States, is a political and moral imperative of our time.

Since the inception of our Organization on 26 June 1945 in San Francisco, the firm resolve of the Member States and peoples of the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war has been faced by a series of armed conflict that, in varying degrees and for different reasons, have deeply struck the human conscience and have damaged the aspirations and hopes of millions of human beings to coexist in peace and harmony.

The international situation of the first years of the new millennium would seem to bode ill for the expectations of millions of globalized human beings, despite undeniable and meaningful advances in terms of information technology, and gives the impression that there is no room for dialogue and understanding between peoples and Governments — a paradox of the twenty-first century, which, in the view of our delegations, could be resolved only by means of a strong dose of political will and the conscious and renewed creation of a culture of peace, not only for future generations, but also for this one.

The SICA member States agree to recognize the right of peoples to live in peace, in keeping with resolution 39/11 of 12 November 1984, and to actively

promote the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, contained in resolution 53/243 of 13 September 1999. This inalienable right of peoples, strengthened through the daily activities of Governments, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector and organized civil society, could constitute the beginning of a long and difficult path. Nevertheless, it is indispensable to laying the foundation of a new international architecture based on the full respect for life, an end to violence and the promotion and practice of non-violence through education, dialogue and international cooperation, as well as full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, the political independence of States and non-interference in matters that fall essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States, in keeping with the Charter and international law.

There are many tasks to be completed. We are reaching a point of no return if we consider the deterioration that has occurred in many of the current areas of conflict. The suffering of millions of human beings because of poverty, hunger, illiteracy, lack of timely medical care, social injustice, violence, lack of liberty and weak democratic institutions are all major obstacles which must be overcome as soon as possible, failing which they could become elements causing further destruction of our civilization.

The SICA member States are aware of these challenges. We have dedicated considerable efforts towards overcoming these problems in different ways, including by strengthening the process of regional integration; not only from a social and economic perspective, but also on the basis of a shared vision of the political future that we want for our region. We agree that this effort must be globalized so that it will attain the critical mass which will make it possible to bring about the required adjustments and changes in individual and collective values that are designed to bring about a genuine culture of peace. In this context, the political will of our States conjoined with individual changes of attitude are indispensable if we are to reach this goal.

We call upon the United Nations to play a critical part in this process, not only as a reflection of the collective will of its Member States, but also on behalf of those whose voices cannot be heard. In order to realize this purpose, we must bring about the structural and institutional changes that will enable our Organization to satisfy the hopes and expectations of peoples. The United Nations must therefore renew itself so that it then will be able to lead the efforts of humanization in this new millennium.

Mr. Kim Chang Guk (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The ultimate idea of humankind is to lead an independent and creative life in a peaceful world and in harmony with all. The culture of peace, in our view, is purported to establish a world culture that enables all countries, nations and peoples to enjoy together their own lives and cultures, and to promote mutual understanding and cooperation and peaceful coexistence.

Today, dominance, chauvinism and ultra-nationalism still exist in our world and continue to antagonize and suppress the inherent cultural traditions of other nations. Whether a peaceful world, to which humankind aspires, is built or not, depends on the ideological consciousness of humankind. The Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) states that "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed ...".

We cannot build a just world with peace for all when hatred and prejudice are firmly settled in our minds.

My delegation would like to emphasize that it is particularly important to educate new generations to have the spirit of love for our planet and for mankind. The new generations are the future of our world; future peace depends on whether the new generations have the will to cherish peace, which is nurtured through true education. But persistent negative actions are imbuing new generations with chauvinistic and ultra-nationalist ideas. The history of aggression is being distorted and glorified as a history of liberation. Past crimes, including the occupation by force of other countries, the enforced drafting of millions of youth, forced sexual slavery of women and the massacre of innocent civilians, have been erased from history textbooks. In contrast, a distorted history teaches the new generations that such crimes contributed to the prosperity of a region. As a result, children have erroneous views of their country's past history and why other nations came to settle in their country. Those children thoughtlessly hate and reject other nationals.

The unilateralism and high-handedness which emerge in international relations today also represent a

grave challenge to the culture of peace. Only when the principles of sovereign equality and mutual respect are observed, can the culture of peace be properly established.

Because of their historical experiences of the past and today, our people aspire to and value peace more than anyone else. For decades in the past, the Korean nation suffered from aggression and plunder by outside forces and has experienced, for over half a century, the painful national division which was imposed, artificially, by outside forces.

In my country, where the main centre of the *juje* philosophy is embodied, children and youth are nurtured to be genuine human beings who value the dignity and honour of their homeland and devote themselves to friendship and harmony among peace-loving people of the world. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue in the future to actively cooperate with United Nations Member States, with a view to building the independent and peaceful world to which humankind aspires.

Mr. Neil (Jamaica): There is no higher duty for the United Nations than the promotion of peace. To carry out this mandate requires us to reach beyond the operation of conflict resolution mechanisms. It should also seek to entrench within societies in the global community the values of peaceful coexistence, tolerance, non-violence, international understanding, respect for cultural diversity and non-discrimination. It should reject war, militarism, the use of force and the dissemination of doctrines based on hatred and domination.

In order to create and promote a culture of peace, Governments have a responsibility to ensure that there are peaceful mechanisms for the settlement of disputes and for conflict prevention. They should also seek to inculcate humane norms and values, which are necessary to overcome the violence and hatred which persist throughout the world. One important medium through which this can be achieved is education. As noted in the Secretary-General's report, education at all levels and in all its forms constitutes a vital tool for addressing virtually all global problems relevant to peace and development, in particular poverty, HIV/AIDS and environmental degradation, as well as those associated with rural development, knowledge formation and knowledge-sharing. It provides the means through which to promote empowerment, to generate income and to develop communities, especially for the most vulnerable members of society, namely women and children. To this end, the work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund in support of peace education activities should be applauded and encouraged, in particular those programmes aimed at children and young people.

Meaningful progress also depends on the extent to which the family, as the basic unit of socialization, becomes involved in ensuring that values of peace and tolerance are transmitted to succeeding generations. Similarly, due recognition should be given to the important role that the mass media can play in promoting peace and non-violence, especially in this era of advanced information and communications technology. To this end, it is imperative that freedom of speech not be used as a pretext for inciting violence and hatred within and among societies.

Additionally, efforts must be strengthened to reinforce the commitment of nations and civil societies to a culture of peace and to intensify the implementation of programmes, activities and projects which have been elaborated for this purpose. Such initiatives augur well for increasing public awareness and support for the observance of the rule of law. It is therefore pleasing to note that the communication and networking arrangements established during the International Year for the Culture of Peace are being continued and made available to serve actors of a culture of peace in their work during the International Decade. It is imperative, therefore, that there be even closer collaboration between civil society, Member States, the organs of the United Nations system and other regional and international organizations. Building a culture of peace requires such a multi-pronged approach.

The efforts made by the United Nations and the international community in ensuring the maintenance of international peace and security through, inter alia, peacekeeping, peace-building, conflict prevention, disarmament, economic cooperation and the promotion of human rights, have significantly advanced the objectives of creating a culture of peace. However, as recent events have demonstrated, there are manifold threats posed by acts of violence, not simply to human security, but to the very principles and values of the Charter. In strengthening our resolve to respond to these challenges, Member States, individually and

collectively, must fulfil their obligation to ensure that no action is taken in breach of the norms and principles of international law, in order that peace and non-violence can be fostered at all levels.

The President: In accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 32nd plenary meeting, on 15 October, I now call on the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Migliore (Holy See): My delegation welcomes this opportunity to participate once again in the discussion on a culture of peace.

The Holy See has welcomed and embraced diverse and varied cultures for centuries. Against that background, and in speaking about peace, my delegation recognizes, first and foremost, that peace is, essentially, not about structures but about people.

Peace is, above all, about those who are realistic enough to recognize that in spite of the downsides of human nature and society, peace is possible. No effort should be spared in achieving it. To this end, peace must be willed, earned and shared as a common good of humanity.

If we look at the hotbeds of tension in our time, we cannot but ask ourselves how mass media, politicians and public authorities depict the realities surrounding conflict. Does the media to which the affected populations are exposed propose peace? Do public statements and comments speak of peace? Do school books teach the ways of peace? Do conversations that young people have within their families and among their peers prepare them for peace?

The reasons that are given to justify conflict must be duly addressed, before, during and after such conflicts occur. The need to impose an armed defence to dissuade the other party from becoming an enemy should be prudently and carefully weighed against the equal necessity to reach out to the other party, beyond any presumed or alleged enmity, always leaving the door open for any possible peaceful solutions. Consequently, when those with responsibility and obligations with regard to defending peace and order are called upon to decide whether or not to take up legitimate defence, their decision must be subject to the rigorous conditions given within the moral order, because such actions can be justified only when all peaceful means of resolving a crisis have been proved to be impractical, ineffective or impossible.

Unlike the culture of war, the culture of peace entails an ethical approach to life. It shows the right and secure path that leads to the respect for life. War destroys the lives of innocent people, teaches how to kill, throws into upheaval even the lives of those who do the killing and leaves behind a trail of resentment and hatred, thus making it all the more difficult to find a just solution to the very problems which provoked the war.

This year, the United Nations will celebrate the fifty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights. This event calls everyone to the fundamental recognition of the full dignity of every human being. From such recognition springs the right to peace. But, when peace loses its value in society and its importance in public policy, human rights and international obligations are jeopardized and compromised.

Peace is an enterprise of justice. At the root of war, and in particular of terrorism — a type of armed aggression which we are sadly experiencing in the present era — we find serious grievances that have yet to be addressed by the international community: injustice is suffered, legitimate aspirations are frustrated, and multitudes of desperate people who have no real hope of improving their lives are subjected to abject poverty, discrimination, intolerance and exploitation. Such injustices incite violence, and every injustice can lead to war.

Peace — which could be defined as the tranquillity of order — is a fundamental duty of everyone. However, peace is built on mutual trust, and trust can be achieved only with justice and fairness. Peace demands the correction of violations, the redress of abuses, the rehabilitation of victims and the reconciliation of aggrieved parties. The strategy of building trust means overcoming all obstacles that impede works of justice, with a view towards peace. Only in such a climate of peace can a culture of peace take root and flourish.

If development is the new name for peace, then war and the proliferation of weapons must be considered the major enemies of the development of peoples. By putting an end to the arms race, we can begin a true disarmament process with agreements based on authentic and workable safeguards. Reallocating economic and other resources from the arms race to humanitarian needs, such as basic health

care, universal education and the strengthening of the family, will indeed promote and strengthen a culture of peace.

Those are some thoughts my delegation wishes to share in the context of the fortieth anniversary of *Pacem in Terris* — "Peace on Earth" — the epical encyclical letter of Pope John XXIII. Allow me, therefore, to close with the following words of that encyclical:

> "The world will never be the dwelling place of peace, till peace has found a home in the heart of each and every person."

Mr. Zhanibekov (Kazakhstan) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of Kazakhstan would like to thank the Secretary-General for providing the Assembly with the report on a culture of peace, contained in document A/58/182.

Ensuring effective interaction among the world's religions and cultures is extremely important in the current climate of conflict and religious and extremism. I believe that that issue deserves our in-depth consideration. We must re-establish a constructive dialogue among religions by holding regular meetings of leaders of various faiths. Such an international forum, the First Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, was held recently in Kazakhstan for the first time, at our Government's request.

In that connection, draft resolution A/58/L.13, which refers to the Congress, is before the Assembly for consideration. The declaration adopted by the Congress is also available to members as a document of the General Assembly (*A/58/390, annex*).

We support such efforts on the part of the international community to actively promote a culture of peace and dialogue among civilizations.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on these items.

Before proceeding with the draft resolutions, I should like to inform members that, as indicated by the sponsor of draft resolution A/58/L.13, action on that draft resolution will taken at a later date to be announced, to allow for further consultations.

The Assembly will now take decisions on draft resolutions A/58/L.14 and A/58/L.16.

We turn first to draft resolution A/58/L.14, entitled "International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: the Marshall Islands, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Uruguay.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/58/L.14?

Draft resolution A/58/L.14 was adopted (resolution 58/11).

The President: We turn next to draft resolution A/58/L.16, entitled "University for Peace". I should like to announce that, since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Algeria, the Republic of Moldova and Spain.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/58/L.16?

Draft resolution A/58/L.16 was adopted (resolution 58/12).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 25 and 44.

Agenda item 16 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(b) Election of twenty-nine members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme

The President: Pursuant to General Assembly decision 43/406, the Assembly will proceed to the election of 29 members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, to replace those members whose term of office expires on 31 December 2003.

The 29 outgoing members are: the Bahamas, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Denmark, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, the Gambia, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Marshall Islands, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Slovakia, Suriname, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda and the

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Those States are eligible for immediate re-election.

I should like to remind members that, after 1 January 2004, the following States will still be members of the Governing Council: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Chad, China, the Congo, Cuba, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Sudan, Switzerland, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United States of America, Uruguay, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Therefore, those 29 States are not eligible in this election.

As members are aware, in accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, "all elections shall be held by secret ballot" and "there shall be no nominations". However, I should like to recall paragraph 16 of General Assembly decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it that the General Assembly decides to proceed to the election on that basis?

It is so decided.

Regarding candidatures, I have been informed by the Chairmen of the regional groups, that for the eight seats from the African States, the eight endorsed candidates are Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Ghana, Morocco, Senegal, Somalia and the United Republic of Tanzania. For the seven seats from the Asian States, the seven endorsed candidates are Bangladesh, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Saudi Arabia and Tuvalu. For the three seats from the Eastern European States, the three endorsed candidates are Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland. For the five seats from the Latin American and Caribbean States, the five endorsed candidates are the Bahamas, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico. For the six seats from the Western European States, the six endorsed candidates are Israel, Monaco, the Netherlands, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Since the number of candidates endorsed by the African States, the Asian States, the Eastern European States, the Latin American and Caribbean States and the Western European and Other States corresponds to the number of seats to be filled in each region, may I take it that the General Assembly decides to elect those candidates as members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme for a four-year term of office, beginning 1 January 2004?

I see no objection. It is so decided.

The following 29 States have thus been elected members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme for a four-year term of office, beginning 1 January 2004: the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ghana, Hungary, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, the Netherlands, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Sweden, Turkey, Tuvalu, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

I congratulate the States that have been elected members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme. This concludes our consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 16.

Before turning to the next item on our agenda for today, I would like to inform members that tomorrow morning, Tuesday, 11 November, the General Assembly will consider as its first item a report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 17 (a), appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, contained in document A/58/561. I also wish to bring to the attention of Members a matter concerning agenda item 15 (b), on the election of the members of the Economic and Social Council, that is scheduled to take place tomorrow, Tuesday, 11 November 2003. In connection with this sub-item, I would like to draw attention of Members to a letter dated 5 September 2003, from the Permanent Representative of Portugal addressed to the President of the General Assembly. This letter has been circulated as document A/58/357. In his letter, the Permanent Representative of Portugal announces that Portugal will relinquish its seat on the Economic and Social Council for the remainder of its term in favour of Turkey. Consequently, it will be necessary for the Assembly to conduct a by-election to fill that one

vacancy, in accordance will rule 140 of its rules of procedure. In this regard, I should like to inform Members that tomorrow, Tuesday, 11 November, the General Assembly will first conduct a by-election to fill this one vacancy, and then proceed to the election of 18 members of the Economic and Social Council.

Agenda item 42 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the United Nations Year for Cultural Heritage

Draft resolution A/58/L.11

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly held the debate on this agenda item at its 51st first plenary meeting, on 31 October 2003.

Mr. Roshdy (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Egypt has the pleasure of introducing some amendments to the draft resolution in A/58/L.11.

(*spoke in English*)

Revise preambular paragraph 2 to read as follows:

> "Welcoming the ratification of the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and the Natural Heritage by 176 States parties, and noting the inscription of 754 sites on the World Heritage List."

This is the first proposed revision. The second proposal is to insert a new operative paragraph 1 bis that reads as follows:

> "Welcomes with satisfaction the adoption of the International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at its thirty-second session on 17 October 2003."

(*spoke in Arabic*)

My delegation thanks all the other sponsors of this draft resolution.

The President: Upon request from delegations concerned, action on draft resolution A/58/L.11 will be taken at a later date, to be announced.

The meeting rose at noon.